

1 **WE CLAIM:**

1 1. A client terminal connectable to a video distribution system and a display device, the
2 video distribution system provides program guide information to create a program guide that
3 includes program guide entries for subscribed channels and non-subscribed channels, the client
4 terminal comprising:

- 5 a video distribution system interface to receive the program guide information;
6 a display interface to display the program guide on the display device;
7 a user interface to receive user input; and
8 a terminal controller responsive to a subscription control program for:
9 a. in response to user input, selecting a program guide entry from the program
10 guide; and
11 b. if the selected program guide entry is for a non-subscribed channel,
12 i. selecting a bundle of channels based upon a subscription matrix for the
13 user, the selected program guide entry, and available bundles of channels
14 for subscription; and
15 ii. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to
16 the video distribution system.

1 2. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein selecting a bundle of channels further comprises:
2 a. recommending at least one bundle of channels for subscription by the user;
3 b. accepting user input to select a bundle of channels for subscription by the user; and
4 c. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to the video
5 distribution system.

1 3. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, the video distribution system after receipt of the
2 subscription request for the selected bundle of channels verifies a user's credit with a billing
3 system to determine whether the user's credit is approved or disapproved for the selected bundle
4 of channels, the terminal controller responsive to the subscription control program for:
5 a. receiving the approval or disapproval from the video distribution system; and
6 b. if the user's credit is approved,
7 i. updating the subscription matrix to reflect that the client terminal is now
8 subscribed to the selected bundle of channels; and

9 ii. authorizing access to the selected bundle of channels.

1 4. The client terminal of claim 3, wherein the subscription matrix is stored both locally at
2 the client terminal and remotely at the video distribution system.

1 5. The client terminal of claim 3, wherein, the subscription matrix includes a client terminal
2 I.D. designating the associated client terminal, channels subscribed to by the client terminal, and
3 available channels not subscribed to by the client terminal.

1 6. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, the selected bundle of channels is the most cost
2 effective bundle of channels having a subscription cost that is less than the subscription cost of
3 individually subscribing to the non-subscribed channel.

1 7. The client terminal of claim 1, further comprising a preference engine, wherein the
2 preference engine selects program guide entries for non-subscribed channels for display in the
3 program guide based upon a user's viewing patterns.

1 8. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, the client terminal is coupled to the video
2 distribution system by a link that provides a persistent connection.

1 9. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, a channel includes a tier of channels.

1 10. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, a channel includes a computer network channel.

1 11. The client terminal of claim 1, further comprising, selecting only a program of the
2 program guide entry on a non-subscribed channel for subscription in selecting the bundle of
3 channels.

1 12. The client terminal of claim 1, wherein, the video distribution system is a cable head end.

RECEIVED

1 13. A computer program embodied in a computer readable storage medium for use in a client
2 terminal connectable to a video distribution system and a display device, the video distribution
3 system provides program guide information to create a program guide that includes program
4 guide entries for subscribed channels and non-subscribed channels, the computer program
5 comprising code segments for:

- 6 a. in response to user input, selecting a program guide entry from the program guide;
7 and
8 b. if the selected program guide entry is for a non-subscribed channel,
9 i. selecting a bundle of channels based upon a subscription matrix for the user,
10 the selected program guide entry, and available bundles of channels for
11 subscription; and
12 ii. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to the
13 video distribution system.

1 14. The computer program of claim 13, wherein selecting a bundle of channels further
2 comprises code segments for:

- 3 a. recommending at least one bundle of channels for subscription by the user;
4 b. accepting user input to select a bundle of channels for subscription by the user; and
5 c. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to the video
6 distribution system.

1 15. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, the video distribution system after receipt of
2 the subscription request for the selected bundle of channels verifies a user's credit with a billing
3 system to determine whether the user's credit is approved or disapproved for the selected bundle
4 of channels, further comprising code segments for:

- 5 a. receiving the approval or disapproval from the video distribution system; and
6 b. if the user's credit is approved,
7 i. updating the subscription matrix to reflect that the client terminal is now
8 subscribed to the selected bundle of channels; and
9 ii. authorizing access to the selected bundle of channels.

1 16. The computer program of claim 15, wherein the subscription matrix is stored both locally
2 at the client terminal and remotely at the video distribution system.

1 17. The computer program of claim 15, wherein, the subscription matrix includes a client
2 terminal I.D. designating the associated client terminal, channels subscribed to by the client
3 terminal, and available channels not subscribed to by the client terminal.

1 18. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, the selected bundle of channels is the most
2 cost effective bundle of channels having a subscription cost that is less than the subscription cost
3 of individually subscribing to the non-subscribed channel.

1 19. The computer program of claim 13, further comprising code segments for:
2 a. displaying a promotion display for a bundle of channels
3 b. in response to user input, selecting the promotion display; and
4 c. transmitting a subscription request for the bundle of channels to the video distribution
5 system.

1 20. The computer program of claim 13, further comprising code segments for selecting
2 program guide entries for non-subscribed channels for display in the program guide based upon a
3 user's viewing patterns.

1 21. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, the client terminal is coupled to the video
2 distribution system by a link that provides a persistent connection.

1 22. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, a channel includes a tier of channels.

1 23. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, a channel includes a computer network
2 channel.

1 24. The computer program of claim 13, further comprising code segments for selecting only
2 a program of the program guide entry on a non-subscribed channel for subscription in selecting
3 the bundle of channels.

- 1 25. The computer program of claim 13, wherein, the video distribution system is a cable head
- 2 end.

FILED

1 26. A method for selecting a bundle of channels utilizing a program guide, the program guide
2 including program guide entries for subscribed channels and non-subscribed channels, the
3 method comprising the steps of:

- 4 a. in response to user input, selecting a program guide entry from the program guide;
5 and
6 b. if the selected program guide entry is for a non-subscribed channel,
7 1. selecting a bundle of channels based upon a subscription matrix for the user,
8 the selected program guide entry, and available bundles of channels for
9 subscription; and
10 2. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to a
11 video distribution system.

1 27. The method of claim 26, wherein selecting a bundle of channels further comprises steps
2 for:

- 3 a. recommending at least one bundle of channels for subscription by the user;
4 b. accepting user input to select a bundle of channels for subscription by the user; and
5 c. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to the video
6 distribution system.

1 28. The method of claim 26, wherein, the video distribution system after receipt of the
2 subscription request for the selected bundle of channels verifies a user's credit with a billing
3 system to determine whether the user's credit is approved or disapproved for the selected bundle
4 of channels, further comprising steps for:

- 5 a. receiving the approval or disapproval from the video distribution system; and
6 b. if the user's credit is approved,
7 i. updating the subscription matrix to reflect that the client terminal is now
8 subscribed to the selected bundle of channels; and
9 ii. authorizing access to the selected bundle of channels.

1 29. The method of claim 28, wherein the subscription matrix is stored both locally at the
2 client terminal and remotely at the video distribution system.

1 30. The method of claim 28, wherein, the subscription matrix includes a client terminal I.D.
2 designating the associated client terminal, channels subscribed to by the client terminal, and
3 available channels not subscribed to by the client terminal.

1 31. The method of claim 26, wherein, the selected bundle of channels is the most cost
2 effective bundle of channels having a subscription cost that is less than the subscription cost of
3 individually subscribing to the non-subscribed channel.

1 32. The method of claim 26, further comprising steps for:
2 a. displaying a promotion for a bundle of channels
3 b. in response to user input, selecting the promotion display; and
4 c. transmitting a subscription request for the bundle of channels to the video distribution
5 system.

1 33. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of selecting program guide entries
2 for non-subscribed channels for display in the program guide based upon a user's viewing
3 patterns.

1 34. The method of claim 26, wherein, the client terminal is coupled to the video distribution
2 system by a link that provides a persistent connection.

1 35. The method of claim 26, wherein, a channel includes a tier of channels.

1 36. The method of claim 26, wherein, a channel includes a computer network channel.

1 37. The method of claim 26, further comprising the step of selecting only a program of the
2 program guide entry on a non-subscribed channel for subscription in selecting the bundle of
3 channels.

1 38. The method of claim 26, wherein, the video distribution system is a cable head end.

COPIES FOR REFERENCE

1 39. A video distribution system connectable to a client terminal that is in turn connected to a
2 display device, the video distribution system provides program guide information to the client
3 terminal to create a program guide that includes program guide entries for subscribed channels
4 and non-subscribed channels displayable on the display device, the video distribution system
5 comprising:

- 6 a video distribution system controller; and
7 a subscription matrix storage to store a subscription matrix for the client terminal;
8 wherein, in response to user input selecting a program guide entry from the program
9 guide for a non-subscribed channel received from the client terminal, the video
10 distribution system controller:
11 selects a bundle of channels for the client terminal based upon the subscription
12 matrix for the client terminal, the selected program guide entry, and available
13 bundles of channels for subscription.

1 40. The video distribution system of claim 39, wherein selecting a bundle of channels further
2 comprises:

- 3 a. transmitting recommended bundles of channels for the user to the client terminal; and
4 b. accepting user input from the client terminal to select a bundle of channels for
5 subscription by the user.

1 41. The video distribution system of claim 40, wherein, after receipt of the user input from
2 the client terminal to select a bundle of channels, the video distribution system controller:

- 3 a. verifies a user's credit with a billing system to determine whether the user's credit is
4 approved or disapproved for the selected bundle of channels; and
5 b. if the user's credit is approved,
6 i. updates the subscription matrix to reflect that the client terminal is now
7 subscribed to the selected bundle of channels.

1 42. The video distribution system of claim 41, wherein the video distribution system
2 controller updates a subscription matrix located at the client terminal such that the client terminal
3 authorizes access to the selected bundle of channels.

1 43. The video distribution system of claim 41, wherein, the subscription matrix includes a
2 client terminal I.D. designating the associated client terminal, channels subscribed to by the
3 client terminal, and available channels not subscribed to by the client terminal.

1 44. The video distribution system of claim 39, wherein, the selected bundle of channels is the
2 most cost effective bundle of channels having a subscription cost that is less than the
3 subscription cost of individually subscribing to the non-subscribed channel.

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60

1 45. A client terminal connectable to a video distribution system and a display device, the
2 video distribution system provides promotion information to create a promotion display that
3 advertises a bundle of channels, the client terminal comprising:
4 a video distribution system interface to receive the promotion information;
5 a display interface to display a promotion display for a bundle of channels on the display
6 device;
7 a user interface to receive user input; and
8 a terminal controller responsive to a subscription control program for:
9 a. in response to user input, selecting a promotion display for a bundle of
10 channels; and
11 b. transmitting a subscription request for the selected bundle of channels to the
12 video distribution system.

1 46. The client terminal of claim 45, further comprising a preference engine, wherein the
2 preference engine selects a promotion display for a bundle of channels for display on the display
3 device based upon a user's viewing patterns.

1 47. The client terminal of claim 45, wherein, the video distribution system after receipt of the
2 subscription request for the selected bundle of channels verifies a user's credit with a billing
3 system to determine whether the user's credit is approved or disapproved for the selected bundle
4 of channels, the terminal controller responsive to the subscription control program for:
5 a. receiving the approval or disapproval from the video distribution system; and
6 b. if the user's credit is approved,
7 i. updating a subscription matrix to reflect that the client terminal is now
8 subscribed to the selected bundle of channels; and
9 ii. authorizing access to the selected bundle of channels.

1 48. The client terminal of claim 47, wherein the subscription matrix is stored both locally at
2 the client terminal and remotely at the video distribution system.

1 49. The client terminal of claim 48, wherein, the subscription matrix includes a client
2 terminal I.D. designating the associated client terminal, channels subscribed to by the client
3 terminal, and available channels not subscribed to by the client terminal.

- 1 50. The client terminal of claim 45, wherein, the client terminal is coupled to the video
2 distribution system by a link that provides a persistent connection.
- 1 51. The client terminal of claim 45, wherein, a channel includes a tier of channels.
- 1 52. The client terminal of claim 45, wherein, a channel includes a computer network channel.

FOR E&E "E3502650